

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0951
INFO AMEMBASSY NASSAU IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 1874

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, CS
SUBJECT: VESCO DEVELOPMENTS: DEPARTURE MAY BE IMMINENT

REF: SAN JOSE 1844 (NOTAL)

1. LATEST VESCO-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS CONTINUE TO POINT STRONGLY TO HIS IMMINENT DEPARTURE FROM COSTA RICA, POSSIBLY THIS WEEKEND. VESCO'S LAWYER HAS POSTED A DEPARTURE BOND OF ONE MILLION COLONES (\$118,000) WORTH OF MORTGAGE CERTIFICATES FOR VESCO AND NORMAN LEBLANC, THIS AMOUNT MORE THAN COVERS AMOUNT SET BY JUDGE TO ALLOW VESCO TO LEAVE COUNTY (REFTEL). ALSO, EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT VESCO'S LAWYER SPENT MOST OF YESTERDAY AT COURT DEALING WITH DEPARTURE RELATED PAPER WORK.

2. MEDIA AND VESCO-WATCHERS SPECULATE THAT VESCO MUST LEAVE COSTA RICA BEFORE 8 MAY CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT, OR THAT HE WILL BE EXPELLED BY CARAZO. MINISTER OF INTERIOR-DESIGNATE TOLD EMBOFF 28 APRIL THAT HE UNDERSTANDS VESCO IS PREPARING TO DEPART COUNTRY SOON, ANDD THAT IF VESCO DOES NOT, HE WILL BE EXPELLED AFTER CARAZO TAKES OVER. MINISTER-DESIGNATE ADDED THAT AFTER CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT, CARAZO WILL ISSUE AN EXPULSION
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ORDER AT ANY RATE, THUS PREVENTING VESCO FROM RETURNING SHOULD HE DEPART IN THE INTERIM.

3. LA NACION EDITORIAL 28 APRIL NOTES POINTEDLY THAT THERE ARE NO LONGER ANY LEGAL TIES TO KEEP VESCO FROM BEING EXPELLED AND THAT IT WILL BE UP TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT TO DO IT. LA NACION CALLS THE

DECISION POLITICAL, NOT JUDICIAL. THE TONE OF THE EDITORIAL IS THAT VESCO MAY FINALLY BE AT THE END OF HIS LONG STAY IN COSTA RICA.

4. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, THERE ARE REPORTS THAT THE PUBLIC MINISTRY HAS DECIDED TO APPEAL JUDGE'S 25 APRIL DECISION (REFTEL PARA 2). IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER AS PART OF APPEAL PROCESS VESCO'S PERMISSION TO LEAVE COUNTRY WOULD BE REVOKED. MANY OBSERVERS THINK NOT.

5. ONE POSSIBLE DESTINATION FOR VESCO AND LEBLANC MENTIONED WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY IS PANAMA, WHERE VESCO IS REPUTED TO HAVE EXTENSIVE FINANCIAL INTERESTS AND GOOD CONTACTS. NASSAU IS ALSO HEARD AS A POSSIBLE DESTINATION. WEISSMAN

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